

Ms. BERA. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the lifetime achievements of Angelo K. Tsakopoulos.

Mr. Tsakopoulos' story is a story of the American Dream. Angelo immigrated to the United States from Greece at the age of 15. He worked hard. He didn't have a whole lot but went into the real estate business to help pay for his education at California State University, Sacramento. He built a real estate company.

Angelo helped shape Sacramento over his life. The Sacramento Bee has identified Mr. Tsakopoulos potentially as the most influential Sacramentan since John Sutter. His contributions, not just to our community but to philanthropy, to education, and to the arts are outstanding.

Mr. Tsakopoulos also never forgot his roots in Greece. This Monday he will receive lifetime recognition for his service to Hellenism. He established multiple foundations and organizations to celebrate the values and the culture of his homeland.

He also, through his family, continues to do public service through his daughter Eleni who is our Lieutenant Governor in California. On Monday, February 6, all of us in Sacramento, the United States, and all Greek Americans recognize the contributions of Angelo Tsakopoulos and his family; contributions to preserving Greek culture.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. BERA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on the first day of Black History Month to recognize the importance of studying African-American history and Black history in the United States.

It is incredibly important for us to recognize Black history and teach it not only to our young students from elementary school to middle school to high school, but to all Americans. We have to understand the good and the bad. We have to understand the legacy of slavery, Jim Crow, and mass incarceration.

We need to understand—as I stand here on the floor of the House of Representatives in the United States Capitol, a beacon of democracy and freedom—that this is a building that was built by enslaved people. It is important for us to understand that because we need to recognize that and get better at teaching that to future generations of Americans.

We also need to recognize the accomplishments of a few individuals: the moral character of our former colleague, John Lewis, who really was the moral backbone of this institution; the first President that I served under, Barack Obama, the accomplishments, not just as President but as a great human being, father, and husband; my close friend, the first female Vice President, the first African-American Vice President, the first Asian-American Vice President, Vice President KAMALA HARRIS who is a role model for my daughter and future women across the spectrum in the United States; and

our good friend, the minority leader of the Democratic Party, HAKEEM JEFFRIES, someone who we are all proud of.

Let's understand African-American history. Let's teach it. Let's not try to erase the parts that we don't want to teach. If we don't teach Black history, we will be condemned to repeat some of those mistakes. We need to learn from the past, and we need to get better. Let's teach it to all of our students.

HONORING KEN COOLEY

Mr. BERA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Assemblyman Ken Cooley for his decades of service to Sacramento County and the State of California.

Ken served in the California State Assembly for 10 years representing the Eighth Assembly District, which covered the eastern half of Sacramento County.

Assemblyman Cooley started his public service career in Sacramento as the chief of staff to the State assemblyman, and later as chief counsel to the Assembly Finance and Insurance Committee.

He was elected to the Rancho Cordova's first city council in 2002 and twice served as mayor to Rancho Cordova. Ken was a constant presence and continues to be a constant presence throughout our community.

I have had the privilege to go to many events with Ken, and he is a close friend. He is an Eagle Scout, as well, and his commitment to Scouting helped recognize youth achievement through the Boy Scouts of America.

The City of Rancho Cordova and all of us in Sacramento County are better off thanks to his hard work and determination, and I wish him all the best in the next chapter of his life.

AMERICANS HAVE THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT TO KEEP AND BEAR ARMS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. MILLER) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MILLER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, Americans have a fundamental right to keep and bear arms that shall not be infringed.

The unelected bureaucrats at the ATF do not have the constitutional authority to ban guns and violate the Second Amendment rights of American citizens.

I am proud to join my colleagues to fight to block Joe Biden's pistol brace gun ban and also to fight to defund the ATF.

□ 1030

In Illinois, Governor Pritzker signed an unconstitutional gun ban that violates the Second Amendment rights of my constituents. Joe Biden and J.B. Pritzker's policies released dangerous criminals and defund the police, and then they want to take our Second Amendment right to defend ourselves.

I am a proud member of the House Freedom Caucus and the House Second

Amendment Caucus. We are united in our opposition to these unconstitutional attacks on the rights of the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I will always stand for our constitutional rights and protect our Second Amendment rights in Congress.

PROTECTING SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, Social Security coverage is an earned benefit. In January, Social Security beneficiaries began to see an 8.7 percent cost-of-living increase, the largest since 1981. This COLA covers retirees as well as workers who become disabled and surviving children under age 18 whose working parents died.

For nearly a century, America has honored the sacred insurance promise intergenerationally. Those who work throughout their lives will benefit from the fruits of their labor.

Yes, this historic cost-of-living adjustment will help Americans manage their cost of living to pay bills and put food on the table. In addition, millions of Medicare users will now only pay \$35 per month for insulin. This cost savings will benefit hundreds of thousands of Ohioans.

The Social Security COLA along with affordable insulin are being championed by congressional Democrats. We know the foundation of financial stability for over 66 million retired Americans is their earned social insurance benefits. Respecting their lives and their work, Democrats will always honor Social Security and vote to protect it and to strengthen Medicare.

FUND NEW GREAT LAKES AUTHORITY

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to also call upon President Biden to fund the new Great Lakes Authority in the administration's fiscal year 2024 budget request.

With support from our Great Lakes colleagues, the Great Lakes Authority was authorized in the fiscal year 2023 omnibus appropriations bill and signed into law on January 2, 2023.

Across America, regional development instrumentalities like this have existed for decades. Until now, the Great Lakes region was the one major region left out of our Nation's toolkit for regional cooperation, reinvestment, and revitalization.

Launched initially with Federal resources to drive economic and environmental recovery, this authority now exists and aims to become self-sufficient sooner rather than later. This new year brings new opportunities for public-private partnerships across our Great Lakes region for investment and revitalization.

The Great Lakes Authority will harness the region's strengths, which include stewardship of the largest body of freshwater on the continent and on